except just about the entrance, where a perfect forest of them renders escape into the preceding chamber impossible, and moreover about the floral organs an abundance of nectar supplies them with food. There is a fine stumbling-block in the way of the believer in the laws of cross fertilization. As Professor Gray would say, this plant seems to be formed on the plan of 'how not to do it.' Skeptics have pointed triumphantly to the *Aristolochia* as a plant which, with the utmost ingenuity, has provided for insuring self or close fertilization. They had opened flowers in full bloom, found the anthers pouring forth pollen, and the imprisoned insects skipping about the inner chamber completely dusting themselves and its walls with the yellow grains. The stigmatic surface, too, had long been fertilized, its lobes had closed, and having performed its office the pistil was withering away. The fact of self-fertilization in this plant seemed proved. Nature, however, does not disclose all her secrets on the first inspection, and a more careful study of this flower in all its stages will show that its wonderful machinery is contrived solely for securing cross-fertilization through the agency of insects, and that it cannot fertilize itself. In fact the anthers and stigma in any flower *are never open at the same time*. The mystery is explained when we examine the flowers that have blossomed and are withering: *the trap is open and the insects all flown*. Each of the three constrictions, which were at first so narrow as only to admit of a small insect pushing its way between the hairs, is now gaping widely open, and all the bristles so wilted and flaccid as to offer no impediment to their escape. Now turning to a bud just bursting into flower, we find the bristles rigid and the trap set. The stigma is now widely open and ready to receive pollen, but the anthers tightly closed and their pollen quite green. Each flower has then a double duty to perform; first, to catch insects which have been liberated by some flower previously in bloom, and to effect its fertilization with the pollen which they bring; second, to feed and hold them there until its stigma has closed and its anthers burst. And, finally, it opens its trap and sends them forth with unimpaired vigor and a fresh load of pollen for the next flower that blooms."—AMERICAN NATURALIST, *May*.

BOTANICAL NOMENCLATURE.—There are two questions sometimes agitated with respect to the naming of plants. One is, as to the manner of writing specific names, the other, as to the kind of names to be given. The writer would heartily endorse the general custom of botanists with regard to the first question, and would deprecate their custom with regard to the second. Some botanists, after the manner of zoologists, make all their specific names begin with a small letter. Whether a species is named for a man, country, or any thing else with a proper name it must begin with a small letter, thus destroying every remnant of resemblance it might have borne to the original name. On what grounds such a rule was made, it would be hard to say. The rules of language are very plain on such a point and they should not be violated for trivial reasons. It is to the credit of botanists in general that they have not yet adopted this innovation which makes science ungrammatical. But in regard to the second point. Can we not have a little relief from the proper names that in most unstinted lavishness are applied to species? What is the use of them, or what do they mean? If a country is to be honored by a botanical name, let it be honored *once* and then let it retire, but the endless processions of *Canadensis*, *Caroliniana*, *Virginiana*, etc., are a little monotonous, to say the least of it, especially when the names are not always suitable. Such names may commemorate the place from whence the first specimens were obtained for description, but what peculiar appropriateness have they after further discovery. This is the very difficulty of naming a species from any locality. While such a name may be suitable for a time, further discoveries may prove the plant to be of very wide range and may often find it in greater abundance than at the first published locality. But the names of persons are used just as lavishly. It is extremely suitable to dedicate one species or two to diligent

workers in botany, and a genus to the masters, but to have one man's name appended to twenty or thirty species, however distinguished he may be as a collector, gets to be amusing. And to dedicate a beautiful plant to Tom, Dick or Harry, simply because he happens to find a new species, does not tend to make botanical names a special honor to those who deserve them. Just read over the names of new species described by the masters for the past few years. It will be largely a list of proper names. The unfortunate part of it is, that the leaders in botany are helpless in the matter. They must have the plants to describe, must keep on the good side of their diligent correspondents, but they can never do this without naming every other species after the collector. A man will risk breaking his neck for a plant that may bear his name when it comes to be described. Collectors should be more modest in their claims and be content with one or two species, allowing the rest they discover to be named something that will give some idea of the plant. Surely something descriptive of the species can always be found and used for the specific name. Of course, by descriptive names are not meant such as have delighted our eyes in the last few numbers of the American Journal of Science and Arts, where sesquipedalian words, made up of names of elements and half the letters of the Greek alphabet, and stretching clear across a broad page, describe some obscure chemical compound that the weight of such a name could grind to powder. Nor do we want such names as that poor little new double white Violet bears among gardners, namely, *Viola odorata alba fragrantissima plena*. But some simple descriptive adjective added to the generic name would mean something to every one and would always be applicable.—N.

A KANSAS CLEMATIS.—In the June number of the GAZETTE, Mr. Matthew H. Panton, of Junction City, says he found *Clematis ochroleuca* in Cloud county. In 1874, Louis Watson, M. D., of Ellis, Kansas, sent me a *Clematis* which I called *C. ochroleuca*, as it agreed better with the description under that name than with any other which I had. I learned, however, from Dr. Watson that it was not *C. ochroleuca*, but *C. Fremontii*. In "Contributions to American Botany, by Sereno Watson, issued April, 1875," is the following description of *C. Fremontii* as a new plant:

"Stem stout, erect, clustered, 6–12 inches high, leafy and usually branched, more or less villous-tomentose, especially at the nodes; leaves simple, 3–4 pairs, coriaceous and with the veinlets conspicuously reticulated, sparingly villous, sessile, broadly ovate, entire or few-toothed, 2–4 inches long; flowers terminal, nodding, the thick purple sepals an inch long, narrowly lanceolate, tomentose upon the margin, recurved at the tip, the peduncles becoming erect in fruit; akenes silky, 3–4 lines long, the tails less than an inch long, naked above, silky at base. This well marked species, the western representative of *C. ochroleuca*, was first collected by Fremont (n. 194) on his second expedition, but without note of the locality. It was re-discovered during the past season by Louis Watson, M. D., in the neighborhood of Ellis, Kansas."

This is probably what Mr. Panton has found.—J. H. CARRUTH, *Lawrence, Kansas, June 19th*, 1877.

SOME BOTANICAL NOTES FROM KANSAS.—The spring season in Central Kansas opens very irregularly. I have seen the prairies covered with the white and blue blossoms of *Anemone Caroliniana*, large patches of *Androsace occidentalis*, and *Draba Caroliniana*, as early as the 3d or 4th of April, and I once gathered a peculiar form of *Erythronium albidum*, March 27th, having narrow leaves, neither spotted nor blotched, their petioles a reddish color, the sepals neither reflexed nor spreading, but each having a bright yellow spot at the base inside. In other years I have found nearly all of the above making their first appearance about three weeks or a month later. In April, *Anemone Caroliniana* is the most conspicuous and abundant of our prairie flowers, appearing almost as soon as the frost is out of the ground, and is closely followed by